

Applicant : Scott Montgomer
Appl. No. : 09/990,625
Examiner : Akiba K. Robinson
Docket No. : 703602.3

Remarks

Claims 1-47 are pending in this application, of which claims 1, 15, 23, 28, 33, and 44 are independent. Claims 1, 15, 23, 28, 33, and 44 have been amended. No new subject matter has been added.

Claim Objections

The examiner objects to claim 1 because "the body of the claim does not actually disclose refunding postage." The applicants respectfully submit that claim 1, as amended, now renders the objection moot.

Claim Rejections

§ 103 Rejections

Pending claims 1-47 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,547,136 to Sansone ("Sansone") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,005,945 to Whitehouse ("Lupien"). The applicants respectfully submit that the claims, as amended, are now condition for allowance over the cited art.

With respect to claims 1, 15, 23, 28, 33, and 44, the examiner asserts that Sansone discloses storing the tracking ID of postage in a database and refers to the "appropriate information" of label 251 of Sansone. While label 251 of Sansone discloses a unique number 252, the unique number 252 is for use within a data center handling transactions between the buyer and seller of goods, which is separate and distinct from the courier service used for shipping the goods. See, e.g., Fig. 4. Thus, it is not a tracking ID for use within a postal system, i.e., the courier service. In fact, Fig. 3C of Sansone shows such a tracking ID 254 for use within a postal system, but there is no disclosure of storing tracking ID 254 within a database, nor is there such disclosure in Whitehouse.

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Further, with respect to claims 1 and 15, the examiner asserts that Sansone discloses "receiving a postage refund inquiry" as required by claim 1; however, what the Examiner cites to, Col. 6, lines 20-24, does not disclose a postage refund inquiry. Instead, what is disclosed is a request by the buyer of goods to return the goods to the seller, but there's no disclosure of postage refund.

Accordingly, the applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 1, 15, 23, 28, 33 and 44, and their respective dependent claims, 2-14, 16-22, 24-27, 29-32, 34-43, and 45-47, as amended, are allowable over the cited references.

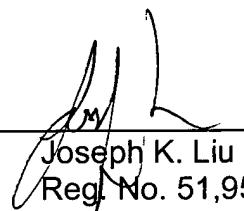
Conclusion

Prompt and favorable action on the merits of the claims is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner have any questions or comments, the undersigned can be reached at (949) 567-6700.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any fee which may be required in connection with this Amendment to deposit account No. 15-0665.

Respectfully submitted,
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